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(54) [Title of the Invention] ILLUMINATION APPARATUS AND
PROJECTION EXPOSURE APPARATUS USING THE SAME

(57) [Abstract]

[Object]

To provide an illumination apparatus and a projection exposure apparatus using the same preferable for fabricating a semiconductor element capable of carrying out projection exposure having a high resolution by selecting an optimum illumination system by a direction, a line width or the like of a shape of a pattern.

[Constitution]

When a light fluxlight beam from a light source is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof by optical means, the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are made to form a plurality of secondary light sources by way of an optical integrator, light fluxlight esbeams from the plurality of secondary light sources are condensed by a condenser lens to illuminate a pattern on an illuminated face, and the pattern is projected to be exposed on a substrate face by a projection optical system, the optical means includes an adjusting member for independently adjusting relative light amounts of respectives of the plurality of light

fluxlight esbeams.

[Claims]

[Claim 1]

An illumination apparatus characterized in that when a light fluxlight beam from a light source is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof by optical means, the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are made to form a plurality of secondary light source by way of an optical integrator, and light fluxlight esbeams from the plurality of secondary light sources are condensed by a condenser lens to illuminate an illuminated face, the optical means includes an adjusting member for independently adjusting relative light amounts of respectives of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams.

[Claim 2]

A projection exposure apparatus characterized in that when a light fluxlight beam from a light source is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof by optical means, the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are made to form a plurality of secondary light sources by way of an optical integrator, light fluxlight esbeams from the plurality of secondary light sources are condensed by a condenser lens to illuminate a pattern on an illuminated face, and the pattern is projected to be exposed onto a substrate face by a projection optical system, the optical means includes an adjusting member for independently adjusting relative light

amounts of respectives of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams.

[Claim 3]

The projection exposure apparatus according to Claim 2, characterized in that the optical means includes a first polarized beam splitter for splitting an incidence light fluxlight beam into two light fluxlight esbeams having predetermined polarization characteristics, and a second, a third polarized beam splitter for splitting two light fluxlight esbeams from the first polarized beam splitter further into two light fluxlight esbeams.

[Claim 4]

The projection exposure apparatus according to Claim 3, characterized in that the adjusting member is constituted by a pivotable phase element arranged on front sides of the first, the second, the third polarized beam splitters.

[Claim 5]

The projection exposure apparatus according to Claim 3, characterized in that the adjusting member includes a fixed or an attachable/detachable light reducing member by which a light reduction amount is constant or variable in an optical path of one of the light fluxlight beam in the two light fluxlight esbeams split by the first polarized beam splitter.

[Claim 6]

The projection exposure apparatus according to Claim 5,

characterized in that the light reducing member is constituted by an ND filter or a half mirror.

[Detailed Description if the Invention]

[0001]

[Industrial Field of Application]

The present invention relates to an illumination apparatus and a projection exposure apparatus using the same, specifically relates to an illumination apparatus and a projection exposure apparatus using the same capable of easily achieving a high resolution by pertinently illuminating a pattern on a face of a reticle in a so-to-speak stepper constituting an apparatus of fabricating a semiconductor element.

[0002]

[Background Art]

Progress of a technology of fabricating a semiconductor element in recent times is remarkable, and also progress of a micromachining technology in accordance therewith is remarkable. Particularly, an optical machining technology reaches a technology of micromachining having a resolving power of a submicrometer by constituting a boundary by fabrication of a semiconductor element of 1MDRAM. As means for promoting a resolving power, until now, in a number of cases, there is used a method of fixing an exposure wavelength and increasing NA (numerical aperture) of an optical system. However, in

recent times, there have variously been carried out trials of promoting a resolving power by an exposure method using an ultra high pressure mercury lamp by changing an exposure wavelength from g radiationg-line to i radiationi-line.

[0003]

With the progress of a method of using g radiationg-line or i radiationi-line as the exposure wavelength, also a resist process have similarly been developed. Photolithography has rapidly been progressed by combining both of the optical system and the process.

[0004]

It is generally known that a focal depthdepth of focus of a stepper is inversely proportional to a square of NA. Therefore, in order to achieve a resolving power of a submicrometer, there poses a problem that the focal depthdepth of focus is shallowed along therewith.

[0005]

In contrast thereto, there have been variously proposed methods of achieving promotion of a resolving power by using light having a shorter wavelength represented by an excimer laser. It is known that an effect of using light having a short wavelength is generally provided with an effect of being inversely proportional to a wavelength, and a focal depthdepth of focus is deepened by an amount of shortening a wavelength.

[0006]

Other than using light formed into a short wavelength, there have been variously proposed methods of using a phase shift mask (phase shift method) as a method of promoting a resolving power. According to the method, there is formed a thin film providing a phase difference of 180 degrees to light transmitting through other portion at a portion of a mask of a background art to promote a resolving power and the method is proposed by Levenson et all of IBM corporation (United States). When a wavelength is designated by notation λ , a parameter is designated by notation k_1 , and a numerical aperture is designated by NA, a resolving power RP is generally shown by an equation of $RP = k_1 \lambda / NA$. It is known that the parameter k_1 normally having a practical region 0.7 through 0.8 can considerably be improved to about 0.35 in the phase shift method.

[0007]

There are known various phase shift methods, and the methods are described in details in, for example, a paper of Hukuda or the likeet al., of Nikkei Microdevice, 1990, July, page 108 and thereafter.

[0008]

However, in order to promote a resolving power by actually using a phase shift mask of a spatial frequency modulating type, a number of problems still remain. For example, there are problems in a current state as follows.

- (a) A technology of forming a phase shift film is not established.
- (b) Development of CAD optimum for a phase shift film is not established.
- (c) A pattern which cannot be attached with a phase shift film is present.
- (d) In relation to (c), a negative type resist is obliged to be used.
- (e) Inspection, modification technology is not established.

[0009]

Therefore, there are various hazards in actually fabricating a semiconductor element by utilizing a phase shift mask and at present, the fabrication is considerably difficult.

[0010]

In contrast thereto, the applicant has proposed an exposure method further promoting a resolving power and an exposure apparatus using the same in Japanese Patent Application Publication 3-28631 (filed on February 22, 1991).

[0011]

According thereto, projection having a high resolution is carried out by splitting illuminating light (effective light source) into four portions to constitute illuminating light in a shape of a quadruple.

[0012]

Fig.9 is an outline view of an essential portion of a

projection exposure apparatus for a high resolving power previously proposed by the applicant.

[0013]

In the drawing, a light fluxlight beam emitted from an excimer laser 101 is subjected to beam shaping by a beam shaping optical system (not illustrated) and thereafter, split into a plurality of light fluxlight esbeams incoherent to each other in amplitudes thereof by a light splitting means 109a to emit to be incident on an optical integrator 110.

[0014]

A light intensity distribution at an incidence face 110a of the optical integrator 110 is as shown by, for example, Fig.10. At this occasion, also an emission face 110b is provided with a light intensity distribution in correspondence therewith.

[0015]

Further, Fig.10 shows a case of splitting the incidence light fluxlight beam into four light fluxlight esbeams by the light splitting means 109a.

[0016]

The light fluxlight beam from the optical integrator 110 is condensed by a condenser lens 111 to illuminate a reticle 112 constituting an illuminated face. Further, a pattern on a face of the reticle 112 is projected onto a face of a wafer 114 by a projection optical system 113.

[0017]

In the drawing, the light intensity distribution at the emission face 110b of the optical integrator 110 is constituted by a shape as shown by Fig.10, and the emission face 110b is imaged onto a pupil of the projection optical system 113 by the condenser lens 111. Thereby, the pattern projection having a high resolution is carried out with regard to a specific pattern of the reticle 112.

[0018]

[Problems that the Invention is to Solve]

Generally, an image quality (resolution) of a pattern transcribed onto a wafer face is significantly influenced by a property of an illumination apparatus, for example, an angular distribution (light distribution characteristic/light directional distribution characteristic) of illuminating light on an illuminated face.

[0019]

According to a projection exposure apparatus for fabricating a semiconductor element, owing to a dispersion in an integration accuracy or an aging variation of respective elements, it is very difficult to uniformly maintain a light distribution characteristic/light directional distribution characteristic on a reticle face constituting an illuminated face. Therefore, there is a case in which a resolving power of a pattern image is reduced by asymmetry of the light

distribution characteristic light directional distribution characteristic on the illuminated face.

[0020]

It is an object of the invention to provide an illumination apparatus capable of arbitrarily adjusting an illuminance distribution based on a plurality of light fluxlight esbeams on an incidence face of an optical integrator constituting a portion of an illumination apparatus in a projection exposure apparatus previously applied by the applicant, thereby, arbitrarily adjusting a light distribution characteristic light directional distribution characteristic on an illuminated face, capable of easily providing a pattern image having a high resolution and preferable for fabricating a semiconductor element and a projection exposure apparatus using the same.

[0021]

[Means for Solving the Problems]

An illumination apparatus of the invention is characterized in that when a light fluxlight beam from a light source is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof by optical means, the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are made to form a plurality of secondary light source by way of an optical integrator, and light fluxlight esbeams from the plurality of secondary light sources are condensed by a condenser lens to illuminate an

illuminated face, the optical means includes an adjusting member for independently adjusting relative light amounts of respectives of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams.

[0022]

A projection exposure apparatus of the invention is characterized in that when a light fluxlight beam from a light source is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof by optical means, the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are made to form a plurality of secondary light sources by way of an optical integrator, light fluxlight esbeams from the plurality of secondary light sources are condensed by a condenser lens to illuminate a pattern on an illuminated face, and the pattern is projected to be exposed onto a substrate face by a projection optical system, the optical means includes an adjusting member for independently adjusting relative light amounts of respectives of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams.

[0023]

Further, the projection exposure apparatus of the invention is characterized in that (a) the optical means includes a first polarized beam splitter for splitting an incidence light fluxlight beam into two light fluxlight esbeams having predetermined polarization characteristics, and a second, a third polarized beam splitter for splitting two light fluxlight esbeams from the first polarized beam splitter

further into two light fluxlight esbeams, (b) the adjusting member is constituted by a pivotable phase element arranged on front sides of the first, the second, the third polarized beam splitters, (c) the adjusting member includes a fixed or an attachable/detachable light reducing member by which a light reduction amount is constant or variable in an optical path of one of the light fluxlight beam in the two light fluxlight esbeams split by the first polarized beam splitter, (d) the light reducing member is constituted by an ND filter or a half mirror, and the like.

[0024]

[Embodiment]

Fig.1 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 1 of the invention.

[0025]

In the drawing, numeral 1 designates a light source, which is constituted by, for example, excimer laser or the like formed into a narrow band. A light fluxlight beam from excimer laser 1 is formed into a narrow band by a prism, a grating or combinations of these and an etalon or the like and is provided with a very storing polarization characteristic.

[0026]

Notation 1a designates a beam shaping optical system for subjecting the light fluxlight beam from the light source 1 to beam shaping to be emitted thereafter. Numeral 20

designates optical means, by which a light fluxlight beam from the beam shaping optical system 1a is split into a plurality of incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof, and emitted after independently adjusting respective relative intensities of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams by an adjusting member, and is made to be incident on an incident face 10a of an optical integrator 10. The incidence face 10a is formed with a plurality of light amount distributions based on the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams as shown by, for example, Fig.10.

[0027]

The optical integrator 10 is constituted by two-dimensionally aligning a plurality of small lenses by a predetermined pitch. An emission face 10b of the optical integrator 10 is formed with a plurality of two-dimensional light sources.

[0028]

Numeral 11 designates a condenser lens for condensing a light fluxlight beam from the emission face 10b of the optical integrator 10 to be incident on a half mirror 21. A reticle 12 constituting an illuminated face is illuminated by portions of light fluxlight esbeams reflected by the half mirror 21.

[0029]

Further, each element from the light source 1 to the reticle 12 constitutes one element of an illumination

apparatus.

[0030]

Numeral 13 designates a projection optical system for subjecting a pattern on a face of the reticle 12 to reduction projection onto a face of the wafer 14. Numeral 22 designates a pin hole which is arranged at a position optically equivalent with the reticle 12 by way of the half mirror 21.

[0031]

Numeral 23 designates an optical detector for detecting a light fluxlight beam emitted through the half mirror 21 and passing through the pin hole 22 to thereby indirectly monitor an illuminance on the face of the reticle 12. The optical detector 23 is constituted by a two-dimensional CCD, a 4 split sensor or the like for measuring a total light amount passing through the pin hole 22 and monitoring intensity ratios of effective light source of a plurality of regions (for example, 4 regions) formed at the emission face 10b of the optical integrator 10 as described later. The intensity ratios of the plurality of regions on the emission face 10b of the optical integrator 10 are adjusted to be equal by adjusting means at inside of the optical means 20 described later.

[0032]

Further, the condenser lens 11 forms a plurality of secondary light sources formed at vicinities of the emission face 10b of the optical integrator 10 at a pupil 13a of the

projection optical system 13 as a secondary light source image by way of the half mirror 21.

[0033]

According to the embodiment, a circuit pattern having a high resolution is projected and exposed by adopting an illumination method (high resolution illumination) similar to that proposed by Japanese Patent Application 3-28613 mentioned above by variously changing a light intensity distribution of the secondary light source image formed at the pupil facepupil plane 13a of the projection optical system 13.

[0034]

Next, a constitution of the optical means 20 of the embodiment will be explained. Fig.2 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 1 of the optical means 20 of the embodiment.

[0035]

According to the embodiment, there is shown a case in which the incidence light fluxlight beam from the beam shaping optical system 1a is split into 4 incoherent light fluxlight esbeams in amplitudes thereof to be emitted thereafter (further, a number of the split light fluxlight esbeams is not limited to 4 but may be any).

[0036]

Numeral 1 designates the light source for emitting the light fluxlight beam having a strong polarization

characteristic. In the drawing, notations 2, 5a, 5b, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d designate phase plates of $\lambda/2$ plates or the like respectively as the adjusting members, which are made to be able to be adjusted to rotate centering on an optical axis. Notations 3, 6a, 6b respectively designate first, second, third polarization beam splitters. Notations 4, 7a, 7b respectively designate mirrors.

[0037]

Fig.3 shows a polarization state and an amplitude of the light fluxlight beam at respective points (A through F_4) of Fig.2 in correspondence with respective positions (A through F_4) of Fig.2.

[0038]

The light fluxlight beam emitted from the light source 1 in a polarized state as indicated by A shown in Fig.3 (0° linearly polarized light) is converted into a light fluxlight beam in a polarized state as indicated by B of Fig.3 (45° linearly polarized light) by pertinently adjusting the $\lambda/2$ plate 2 as the adjusting member, and split into two light fluxlight esbeams of an equal intensity having polarized states orthogonal to each other as indicated by C_1 , C_2 of Fig.3 (0° linearly polarized light and 90° linearly polarized light) by passing the first polarization beam splitter 3.

[0039]

The light fluxlight esbeams C_1 , C_2 are converted into 45°

linearly polarized light again as indicated by light fluxlight esbeams D₁, D₂ by the $\lambda/2$ plates 5a, 5b as the adjusting members adjusted pertinently. Further, the light fluxlight esbeams D₁, D₂ are split into 4 light fluxlight esbeams of an equal intensity as indicated by light fluxlight esbeams E₁, E₂, E₃, E₄ by passing the second, the third polarization beam splitters 6a, 6b.

[0040]

Further, as shown by Fig. 4 (A), the four light fluxlight esbeams are directed to respective predetermined positions of the incidence face 10a of the optical integrator 10 and form 4 distributions G1 through G4 on the face 10a to form 4 secondary light source groups at vicinities of the emission face 10b.

[0041]

The $\lambda/2$ plates 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d of Fig. 2 are for arbitrarily be changing polarizing directions of the respective light fluxlight esbeams incident on the incidence face 10a of the optical integrator 10 and 4 of the light fluxlight esbeams can be set as shown by Figs. 4 (B), (C) by the adjustment.

[0042]

Fig. 5 shows polarized states at respective positions when the $\lambda/2$ plate 2 as the adjusting member is rotated relative to the optical axis to be shifted from the above-described position in the optical means 20 of Fig. 2. At this occasion, a polarized state at position B of Fig. 2 is more or less shifted

from 45° linearly polarized light as indicated by light fluxlight beam B of Fig. 5 to make a ratio of light amount passing through the first polarization beam splitter 3 equal. By such a principle, relative intensity ratios of respective light fluxlight esbeams incident on the incidence face 10a of the optical integrator 10 are adjusted.

[0043]

Although a laser of linearly polarized light is used as the light source 1 according to the embodiment, when, for example, a light source for irradiating a light fluxlight beam of circularly polarized light or elliptically polarized light is used, a similar effect can be achieved by constituting the phase plate 2 by a $\lambda/4$ plate or a combination of a $\lambda/4$ plate and a $\lambda/2$ plate. Further, when more or less nonpolarized component is included in the laser light, only a width of adjusting a light amount is more or less reduced and a hindrance is not brought about thereby.

[0044]

Although it is preferable that the respective polarization beam splitters 3, 6a, 6b are provided with small extinction ratios such that a transmittance is equal to or smaller than 1% in S polarized light, or a reflectance is equal to or smaller than 1% in P polarized light, actually, when a transmittance is equal to or smaller than about 40% in certain polarized light and a reflectance is equal to or smaller than

about 40% in polarized light orthogonal thereto, necessary light amount adjustment can be carried out.

[0045]

Fig.6 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 2 of optical means according to the invention.

[0046]

The drawing is provided with ND filter plates 31, 32 switchable in optical paths of two light fluxlight esbeams split by the first polarization beam splitter 3 of Fig.2. The ND filter plates 31, 32 each is as shown by Fig.7, and is constituted by providing, for example, an ND filter 31a for transmitting 100% of a light fluxlight beam and a plurality of ND filters 31a through 31h having various transmittances on a substrate in a turret type.

[0047]

A cost ratio of light amounts of the two light fluxlight esbeams split by the first polarization beam splitter 3 is adjusted by inserting desired ND filters in respective optical paths such that the transmittance of the ND filter 31a is constituted by 100%, the transmittance of the ND filter 31b is constituted by 95%.

[0048]

In the case of the embodiment, the embodiment is effective even when the light fluxlight beam of the light source 1 is not polarized at all. Further, the light amount ratios

of 4 light fluxlight esbeams may directly be adjusted by arranging the ND filter plates in the optical paths of 4 light fluxlight esbeams split by the second, the third beam splitters 6a, 6b.

[0049]

Fig.8 is an outline of an essential portion of embodiment 3 of optical means according to the invention.

[0050]

The embodiment is a case in which the light source 1 emits light fluxlight beam which is not polarized at all, or is provided with an extremely small polarization degree.

[0051]

In the drawing, numeral 41 designates a first polarization beam splitter having a small extinction ratio, and the light fluxlight beam from the light source 1 is substantially completely split into two of orthogonal linearly polarized lights by passing the first polarization beam splitter 41. Notations 42a, 42b, 42c designate respectively fixed $\lambda/4$ plates which are set to convert linearly polarized light passing through the first polarization beam splitter into circularly polarized light. Notation 42d, 42e designate $\lambda/4$ plates as adjusting members which can be set variably for adjusting ratios of splitting light fluxlight esbeams by the second, the third beam splitters 6a, 6b (light fluxlight beam b_1 : light fluxlight beam b_2 and light fluxlight beam b_3 : light

fluxlight beam b_4).

[0052]

Numerals 43, 44 designate half mirror members each having a plurality of half mirrors capable of changing reflectances and is constructed by a constitution the same as that of the ND filter plate of Fig.9.

[0053]

Now assume that when the half mirror members 43 and 44 are not adjusted (when both of transmittances of half mirrors on the optical axis in the half mirror members 43, 44 are 100%), in a case in which a light amount of light fluxlight beam b_1 + light fluxlight beam b_2 is 100%, and a light amount of light fluxlight beam b_3 + light fluxlight beam b_4 is 80%, the both light amounts are intended to be equal. At this occasion, when the half mirror member 43 is switched to a half mirror having a transmittance of 90%, a reflectance of 10%, the both light amounts become equal.

[0054]

A principle in this case will be explained as follows. Assume that the polarization beam splitter 41 transmits P polarized light through a split face and reflects S polarized light by the split face. The light fluxlight beam from the light source 1 is split into 50% of transmitting light (P polarized light) and 10% of reflecting light (S polarized light) by passing through the polarization beam splitter 41.

90% of transmitting light (P polarized light) is converted into a circularly polarized light by passing through the $\lambda/4$ plate 42b.

[0055]

In the light, 10% of light fluxlight beam reflected by the half mirror 43 is converted into S polarized light by passing through the $\lambda/4$ plate 42b again. The light becomes P polarized light when the light is reflected by the polarization beam splitter 41, reflected by a mirror 44 by way of a $\lambda/4$ plate 42a, and is incident on the polarization beam splitter 41 again, and is directed in a direction of the mirror 4 (direction of b_3 , b_4) without being reflected.

[0056]

Further, 10% of light fluxlight beam is incident on the half mirror portion 44 by passing through the $\lambda/4$ plate 42c. Thereby, the light amount of light fluxlight esbeams ($b_1 + b_2$) becomes 90, the light amount of light fluxlight esbeams ($b_3 + b_4$) becomes 90, and both coincide with each other.

[0057]

According to the embodiment, the light amounts of the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams are adjusted without loss the light amounts by the above-described principle.

[0058]

[Advantage of the invention]

According to the invention, by setting the respective

elements as described above, in the projection exposure apparatus, the illuminance distribution based on the plurality of light fluxlight esbeams on the incidence face of the optical integrator constituting a portion of the illumination apparatus is made to be able to be adjusted arbitrarily, thereby achieving the illumination apparatus preferable for fabricating a semiconductor element capable of easily providing the pattern image having the high resolution by arbitrarily adjusting the illuminance distribution on the illuminated face and the projection exposure apparatus using the same.

[0059]

Further, according to the invention, by changing the polarized state of the light fluxlight beam from the light source, or using light reducing means, an intensity distribution of the effective light source can be controlled by controlling the light amount ratios of the split light fluxlight esbeams, a deterioration in an imaging function caused by asymmetry of the effective light source can be prevented, and the excellent imaging function can be achieved.

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Fig.1]

Fig.1 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 1 of the invention.

[Fig.2]

Fig.2 is an explanatory view of a portion of Fig.1.

[Fig.3]

Fig.3 is an explanatory view of polarized states of light fluxlight esbeams at respective positions of Fig.2.

[Fig.4]

Fig.4 illustrates explanatory views of a light fluxlight beam on an emission face of an optical integrator of Fig.1.

[Fig.5]

Fig.5 is an explanatory view of a light fluxlight beam on the emission face of the optical integrator of Fig.1.

[Fig.6]

Fig.6 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 2 of optical means according to the invention.

[Fig.7]

Fig.7 is an explanatory view of a portion of Fig.6.

[Fig.8]

Fig.8 is an outline view of an essential portion of embodiment 3 of optical means according to the invention.

[Fig.9]

Fig.9 is an outline view of an essential portion of a projection exposure apparatus of a background art.

[Fig.10]

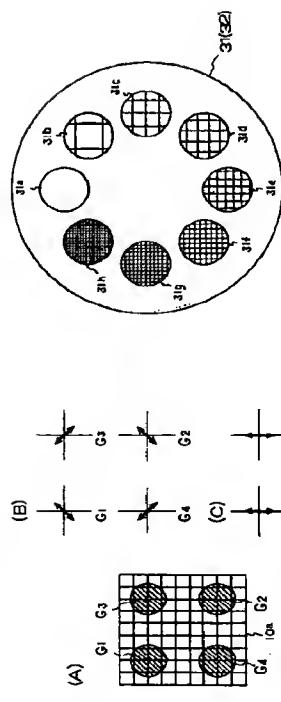
Fig.10 is an explanatory view of a portion of Fig.9.

[Description of Reference numerals and Signs]

1..light source

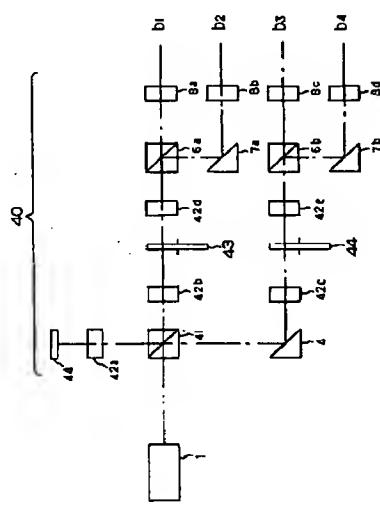
1a..beam shaping optical system
2, 5a, 5b..adjusting members
3, 6a, 6b..polarization beam splitters
10..optical integrator
12..reticle
13..projection optical system
14..wafer
20..optical means
21..half mirror
22..pin hole
23..light detector

[図7]



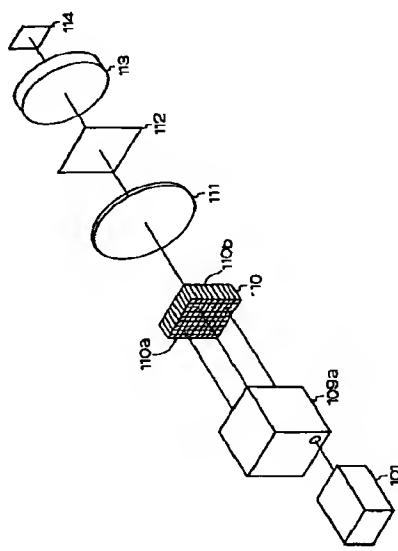
(7)

[図8]



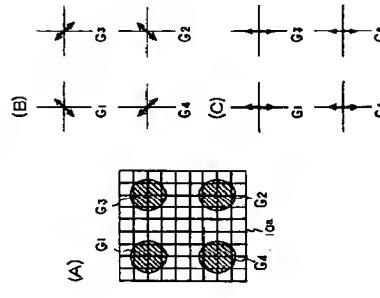
(8)

[図9]

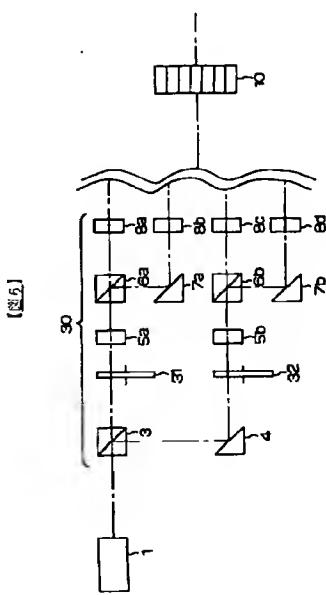


[図8]

[図4]



(7)



[図5]

(7)